Problems and Expectations of Students Regarding the Management of Learning in the Subjects of Thai Music Theory and History within the Thai Undergraduate Music Education Curriculum

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Abstract

This research aimed to investigate the problems and expectations of students regarding the management of learning in the subjects of Thai music theory and history within the Thai undergraduate music education curriculum. The exploratory and descriptive research methodology was employed. The data was collected from 103 students who enrolled in the Thai Music Education curriculum at the undergraduate level. Instruments include a documentary analysis form, and an online questionnaire (Google Form). The results showed that: (1) teaching method was lecture-based, resulting in disengaged learning and limited knowledge acquisition; (2) content was the lack of clear delineation between the content of the two subjects; in many cases, instructors mixed Thai music theory with Thai music history which made students confused and mis-concept; (3) instructional media failed to captivate students and did not facilitate comprehensive learning; (4) instructional materials, each university had different approaches to managing its teaching resources, which were both uninteresting and overly academic; and (5) context consists of the diversity of students, assignments, classroom conditions, and instructor's preparedness. From the results, this research proposes the guideline for the management of learning in Thai music theory and history through Outcome-based education (OBE) and a blended learning approach that can apply to traditional music teaching which is familiar with the Thai culture.

Keywords: blended learning, music education, outcome-based education, Thai music history, Thai music teaching, Thai music theory

Introduction

The essentials of learning music are divided into two main parts: (1) music content, which contains music elements, music literature, and history, and (2) music skill, which consists of listening, singing, performing, moving, creating, and reading. Both are always related and rely on each other (Miller, 1978; Bergethon & Boardman, 1979; Stark, 1976; Sutthachit, 2023). Knowledge of Thai music theory and history has become essential for students pursuing a professional career in music. A deep understanding of these subjects is now necessary as a foundation for advancing their music education at the professional level. Consequently, these subjects are prominently included as required subjects in every music curriculum across all institutions, which means both are significant subjects to be learned. Not only do they support each other among Thai music theory and history knowledge for the student, but they also support the student in learning advanced

musical knowledge in other core subjects of Thai music, such as Thai musical form and analysis, composition, ensembles workshops and conducting, and even Thai music skill, ensemble, and pedagogy subjects. However, another important factor is the variety of knowledge sources used in music theory and the history of Thai music, which includes concepts from various master schools. With so many different information sources, each university in Thailand has relied on different ones, and that these are based on the schools that each professor attended. As a result, it has been found that the teaching of these subjects at the undergraduate level in Thailand has not been clearly standardized in terms of learning outcomes, instructional methods, scope of content, and content details, particularly in institutions aiming to produce professional music educators. Every subject requires the establishment of clear standards and detailed scope contents, and each one should be current and responsive to societal changes, including the evolving learning methods of students. However, such management and standardization have not yet been implemented with respect to the study of music in Thailand. Evidence from research conducted in Thailand reveals a limited focus. Juthaset and Bankrithong (2021) conducted a study on teaching approaches in Thai music theory only at the secondary education level that aimed to investigate the differences in learning strategies of undergraduate music education programs. Furthermore, another study by Kaewsawang (2021) investigated the implementation of project-based learning in Thai music theory for undergraduate students at the Lopburi College of Dramatic Art. Both studies primarily focused on presenting experimental results and teaching approaches in Thai music theory. However, there was a lack of research investigating the current situation, issues, and expectations of undergraduate students regarding the study of Thai music theory and history. Additionally, the scope of study of both subjects needs to focus more on students' understanding of the interrelationships and distinctions among the content details, which researchers considered to be a concerning issue that warranted prompt research. Furthermore, research conducted in foreign countries with cultural similarities to Thailand in the past five years has predominantly focused on studying problems and perspectives in teaching traditional music. Studies such as "Learning and Teaching Traditional Music in Cambodia: Challenges and Incentives" by Grant (2017), "Personality and World Music Preference of Undergraduate Non-music Majors in South Korea and the United States" by Yoo et al. (2018), and "Design of traditional music teaching in colleges and universities from the perspective of multiculturalism" by Zuo (2018) examined various aspects of music education and teaching in Asia. However, no research has been found that investigates the current state and expectations regarding the teaching of music theory and history in those specific cultures.

In this research, the necessity to examine the issues and expectations of students in learning Thai music theory and history within Thai undergraduate music education programs is recognized. The aim was to gather new and current data that had not been previously collected to benefit curriculum development and learning management in higher music education, in order to be suited to the rapidly changing current situation and the need to create innovative learning approaches that enhance efficiency and effectiveness in music education. This research will push Thai music theory and history national standards to be raised and will impact the Thai music educator grooming process and make it much stronger. It will allow understanding of the same scope and clear content, and will also empower music education in Thailand, especially to make the Thai traditional music knowledge stronger and more developed. This is the first study of its kind in Thailand, and it provides valuable insights that can be referenced and applied to the teaching and management of music theory and history within culturally similar contexts, yielding significant benefits.

Objectives

The research aimed to examine the problems and expectations of students regarding the management of learning in the subjects of Thai music theory and history within the Thai undergraduate music education curriculum. In aspects of the teaching method, the focus is upon the student's understanding of subject concepts, instructional media, and context. The study also seeks to identify specific challenges faced by students in each subject and propose guidelines for teaching and learning management based on outcome-based education (OBE) and a blended learning approach.

Benefits

The research findings can be applied to enhance and modernize the management of learning in a manner that is highly relevant and suitable for both teachers and students in the current context. Can be encouraged to raise the Thai music and history national standard that has not been yet in present. Moreover, these

findings also benefit the teaching and learning approaches in music education across different cultural contexts with similar issues and expectations—especially, managing the learning of global music, multicultural music, and even ethnic music, where a better understanding of students and the context of traditional music is highly beneficial.

Literature Review

A brief overview of the Thai music curriculum and learning evolution

Evidence shows that music education in Thailand existed in the *pre-Sukhothai* period (Before 1249), the *Sukhothai* period (1249-1463), the *Ayutthaya* period (1350-1767), the *Thon Buri* period (1767-1782), and the *Rattanakosin* Era (1783-present), and has been consistently progressing ever since. In each era, significant transformations were witnessed in both theoretical and practical knowledge resulting from the influence of three major institutions: households, temples, and palaces. These institutions played a crucial role in driving the acquisition of knowledge and the practice of Thai music education.

A study by Chuppunnarat (2018) investigating the "Development of Thai Music Education Curriculum and Teaching in Thailand" reveals that the evolution in the *Sukhothai* period, the *Ayutthaya* period, the *Thon Buri* period, and the *Rattanakosin* Era (until the country's administration changed in 1932) can be divided into three periods: (1) Thai music education in the *Sukhothai* period, the *Ayutthaya* period, and the *Thon Buri* period. During these periods, the teachers and learners were commoners, nobles, courtiers, the king, and his royal family; the oral tradition was the main teaching approach, and the curriculum consisted of the religious ritual repertoire, the masked drama accompaniment songs, and the entertainment songs for various occasions. No evaluation method has yet been explicitly defined. However, during these periods, no clearly defined curriculum or instructional plan was used; instead, a non-formal or informal educational approach in which emphasis was placed on practical music skills, with theoretical knowledge incorporated informally, was the norm. Music education in Thailand relies on the oral tradition– learning by direct transmission (Amatyakul, 1996; Rungruang 2003; Laovanich, 2013; Chuppunnarat, 2018). This was similar to music education in other cultures worldwide, all of which relied on methods such as rote learning, demonstration, and imitation (McPhee, 1970; Blacking, 1973; Campbell, 1991; Corpataux, 2002; Barton, 2003). Furthermore, Thai music education existed within the framework of teaching by sect masters or in homes. Students in each sect adhered to the knowledge passed down by their respective masters. This gave rise to a diversity of knowledge in both theoretical and practical aspects of Thai music, where each sect master possessed distinct characteristics in terms of principles or beliefs regarding Thai music. These characteristics differed from one master to another and were transmitted from generation to generation; (2) Thai music education in the *Rattanakosin* Era (until the country's administration changed in 1932). The teachers and learners were similar to the previous era, and the curriculum still followed the traditional direction; and (3) Thai music education in the *Rattanakosin* Era (after a significant change in the governance of Thailand, in 1932). Education was formalized more explicitly, which led to the inclusion of music education within the national core curriculum in the formal education system (Office of the National Education Commission, Office of the Prime Minister, 1999). In 1934, the School of Dramatic Arts and Music was established which was named the College of Dramatic Arts as established in the present, focusing on teaching and learning Thai traditional music, dance, and fine arts. In other words, the study of music became a part of the fundamental subjects in the curriculum. Moreover, at present, there are a large number of music courses offered by Thai colleges and universities.

The Thai music curriculum in the *Rattanakosin* Era (before the National Education Act until the present (1892-present)) comprised 19 curriculums and 29 versions. The first curriculum was utilized in 1960 for the primary and secondary education curriculum as an elective course focusing on singing and listening skills. Until the present, music education in Thailand still adjusted to the Basic Education Core Curriculum, 2008 in the courses of arts (Chuppunnarat, 2018; Sutthachit, 2023).

The Thai Music Theory and History Content Categorization

The term "theory" has multiple definitions provided by the various contexts in which it is used; however, a precise and explicit definition of "Thai Music Theory" has not yet been identified. The researcher, therefore, conducted a study based on documents, textbooks, and research papers related to the study of Thai music theory. It was found that, besides the lack of a clear definition, the content of the theoretical aspect includes a combination of Thai music theory and Thai music history (Sowat, 1996). If we go back in time, the study of Thai music theory has long been integrated with practical learning. However, the Thai music learning

culture began with learning through the oral tradition, where teachers would incorporate theoretical aspects while teaching instrumental music without explicitly separating them. This is explained by Sirichaichan Fakchamroon (the Thai National Artist) stating that:

> …Thai music education, in reality, follows an ancient Thai approach, where we begin with practical experience. Teachers would then teach us while we were engaged in practical activities, without explicitly labeling them as theory. Instead, they would emphasize the relevance of these elements to our practical application and how to utilize them. They did not categorize them clearly as distinct theoretical components, as done in foreign practices… (Sowat, 1996, p. 60)

After the establishment of the College of Dramatic Arts, Montri Tramot (the Thai National Artist) authored the first textbook for Thai music theory titled "*Duriyangkhasatthai*" (The Theory of Thai Music) in the year 1938. This textbook became the cornerstone of Thai music theory in Thailand; it served as the primary resource for studying Thai music theory nationwide and also served as a model for subsequent textbooks. The content book comprised three main sections: (1) music history; (2) music principles; and (3) miscellaneous knowledge and perspectives (Department of Fine Arts, 2002). However, the details of the content in each section can be summarized as follows:
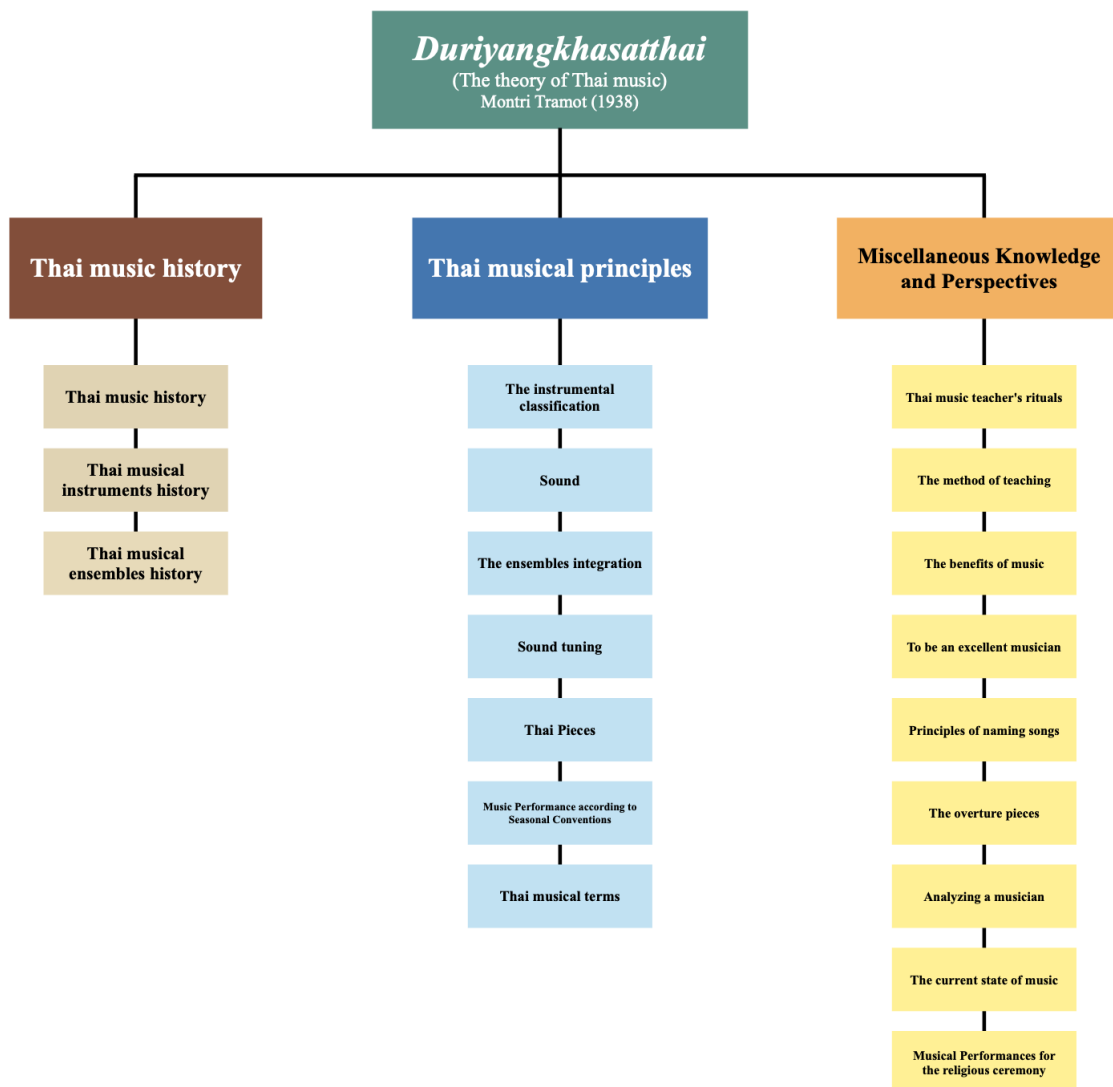

Diagram 1. Summary diagram of the scope of content in the Thai Musicology textbook.

From the above diagram, it can be seen that there is a clear categorization of content related to the history and literature of Thai music in the first section. The second section provides detailed rules for practicing Thai music. The third section is relevant to the general knowledge that Thai musicians should further study. The researcher found that the second section clearly reflects the content of Thai music theory.

By comparing it with the content of Western music theory exams using the framework of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (2020), which is globally recognized, the scope of music theory content for Grades 1–5 can be identified as clef, time signatures, pitches, degrees of scale, keys, scales, time values, rests, intervals, triads, chords, transposition, phrase structure, grouping, ornaments, instruments, instrumental directions, voices, terms, and signs. It is obvious that the designated content is related solely to the rules or order of music rather than content related to the music history part which is consistent with the second part of Montri Tramot's Thai music theory textbook (Department of Fine Arts, 2002). Therefore, the researchers found that the concept of Thai music theory is about the rules and order, while music history is about the timeline and evolution of the music. From the explicit concepts of theory and history, the researchers synthesized and summarized six categories of Thai music theory content as follows: (1) Thai musical instruments and ensembles; (2) sound, rhythm, melody, and genres in Thai music; (3) principles and techniques of Thai instrumental performance and singing; (4) repertoire and Thai musical ensembles— performance of Thai music according to seasonal conventions; (5) Thai music teacher's rituals; and (6) Thai musical terms. From the synthesized six parts of Thai music theory, the researchers focus on the understanding of students by providing a clear concept that arranges the content from small units to large units. As Thai musical instruments are the sounds' origin, and each ensemble is gathered by the instruments, that is the reason these two contents are adjusted into the first part of learning. The second part provides the Thai music elements that are arranged from the smallest to the largest element; sound integrated with rhythm will be the melody, and many composed melodies will be the pieces and songs that are classified. The following parts focus on knowledge application such as the performance practice, the use of repertoire and ensembles on each occasion, and the Thai music teacher's ritual management. The last part is about Thai musical terms and meanings which cover all the parts.
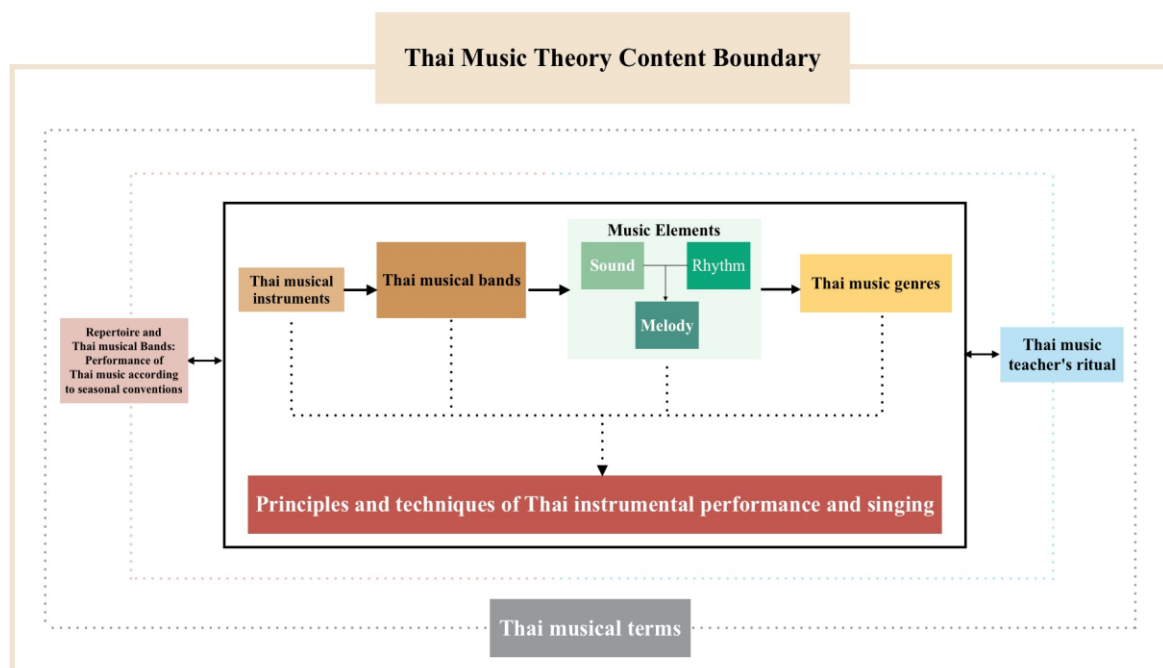

Diagram 2. Summary diagram of the Thai music theory content boundary.

The content of Thai music history, although categorized within the theoretical study of Thai music, exhibits distinct objectives and emphases. It involves the exploration of stories from the past to the present, and the study of the development of music. This is achieved through division according to historical periods; apart from combining theoretical content with Thai music history, it is found that the division of Thai music history is usually based on different eras, often aligned with statism, as follows: (1) *Pre-Sukhothai* period (before 1249); (2) *Sukhothai* period (1249-1463); (3) *Ayutthaya* period (1350-1767); (4) *Thon Buri* period (1767-1782); and (5) the *Rattanakosin* Era (1783-present). To facilitate the connection with the national historical context, it is noteworthy that there are two distinct approaches to dividing the eras of the

Rattanakosin period. The first approach categorizes the eras based on the reigns of monarchs, from the first reign to the present one. The second approach, on the other hand, classifies the periods based on the socio-musical context of Thai music during different time frames. These include the Recovery Era (Reigns 1-3), the Prosperous Era (Reigns 4-6), and the Transitional Era (Reigns 7–present). Additionally, each textbook presents different perspectives and historical evidence, particularly regarding the contemporary aspect and the availability of newly discovered evidence. Moreover, the compilation of evidence is found to be scattered and not consolidated into a single comprehensive textbook. The study of Thai music history focuses on the timeline/period and is evidence-based on aspects of Thai musical instruments, ensembles, pieces, and context/literature evolvement (Chindawat, 1978; Jamnongsarn, 2020; Puchadapirom, n.d.; Rungruang, 2003; Silapabanleng & Pleinsri, 2018).
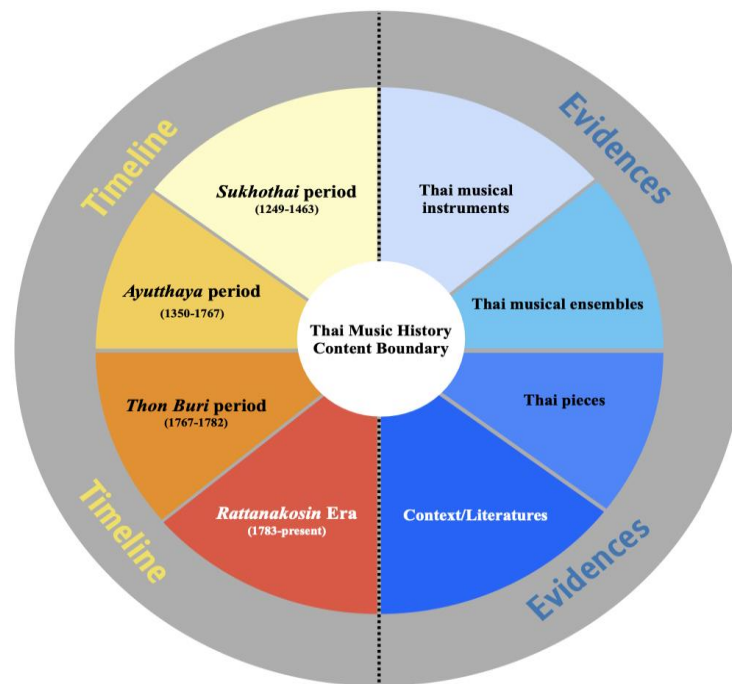

Diagram 3. Summary diagram of the Thai music history content boundary.

Therefore, understanding the differences and categorization of content in Thai music theory, as well as the history and literature of Thai music, is highly significant for comprehension. Thai music theory focuses on the rules and regulations of music, while the history of Thai music is concerned with aspects such as time, historical periods, and the development of music which derive from significant evidence. However, highlighting the differences in important content between the two subjects does not imply that they are completely unrelated. The two subjects are interdependent and rely on each other, particularly in the details of learning where their integration is needed for better comprehension. Clear categorization and delineation of content boundaries in an effort to emphasize the core concepts and essence of each subject will greatly benefit learners in effectively applying their knowledge.

The current study of Thai music education

In the context of Thailand, music educational research study has various aspects and establishes research works such as student research works, academic articles, and books. There are 3 types of music in music education study in Thailand: The Thai traditional music, Thai folk music, and non-Thai music, which is divided into 2 groups: western music, and non-western music.

In terms of music education graduate students' research, only master's degree theses (N=28) could be found by searching using the keyword "music education" from the Thailand Library Integrated System which is the online national research database platform that includes all the Thai graduate students' master's and doctoral degree research in Thai universities. The search period was 2019 to 2023. The thesis

contains the following six areas: (1) musical transmission; (2) music teaching and learning; (3) music teacher's development; (4) music exercises and learning activities development; (5) musical knowledge collecting; and (6) the study of success from lessons learned, as Table 1 shows below:

Table 1

Details of Thai music education theses from 2019 to 2023

Categorized area content	The study details						
	Type of music			Level of degrees			
	TH traditional	TH folks	Non-TH	Primary	Secondary	Under graduate	Non-degree
Musical transmission	2	3	-	-	-	-	-
Music teaching and learning method	1	2	6	5	5	1	
Music teacher's development	-	-	1	-	1		1
Music exercises and learning activities development	-	-	5	5	1	-	2
Musical knowledge collecting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
The study of success from lessons learned	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Total	3	5	13	10	8	1	3

Table 1 provides information about the clarification of Thai music educational thesis areas of study during the previous 5 years. In the aspect of musical type, non-Thai music in the part of Western music is the most frequently employed thesis study area in Thailand, and with reference to 4 areas of content, the musical teaching and learning method has the largest number. Moreover, the studies at the primary student level are strongly concentrated. As a result, the thesis study tendency of Thai traditional music at the undergraduate level in Thailand is significantly lacking. This is related to the information from Thai Journals Online (ThaiJO) which is the Thai national online platform as the database of Thai academic articles from all Thai journals. It reveals that most music education research on undergraduate student study from 2006 to 2023, apparently concentrates on the music teaching and learning method, and curriculum development of both Thai and western music. Moreover, the research aim and scope frequently only focus on case studies in each curriculum, faculty, institute, or university. Therefore, the data were collected from a few populations and a specific group of samples, so the findings predominantly present the teaching and learning guidelines, or curriculum development that is proper only for each area of study. For instance, the study of user opinions of Bachelor of Education programs in music education (4 years) (revised in 2019), Lopburi College of Dramatic Arts (Funfuengfu et al., 2022).

For reviews and analysis of previous music education research on undergraduate students in Thailand, there are a few research studies that examined music education in Thai traditional music which acquired the data from various sources, covering sample groups that will have an impact upon the Thai music education curriculum. No research has studied the issues and expectations of students in learning Thai music theory and history within Thai undergraduate music education programs, and no research presents the Thai music curriculum development and learning management integrated with outcome-based education. Not only Thai music theory and history teaching and learning are very important for the learners, but also the development of Thai music education suited to the rapidly changing current world situation and the need to create innovative learning approaches are significant issues for the Thai music educator to take into consideration. This research will operate as a guideline and prototype for Thai music education research and complete the gap in Thai music education learning management to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in music education in Thailand.

Methodology

This research aimed to investigate the problems and expectations of learners in the teaching of Thai music theory and history within the Thai music education curriculum at the undergraduate level. From the research aim, gathering and analyzing the findings is an important outcome to reveal the current status of these two subjects that affect the Thai music education curriculum. Therefore, the exploratory and descriptive research

methodology was adequately employed to explain the data from the research samples. The following are the details of the study:

Population/Sample Group. The researchers collected data from students enrolled in the Music Education curriculum (Thai music) at the undergraduate level in 5 universities under the Council of University Presidents of Thailand and divided by mission groups of universities by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation. The sampling method employed was cluster sampling; the researchers selected a sample group of students currently studying or having completed courses in Thai music theory and/or Thai music history and literature (2022). The sample consisted of students (N=103) pursuing bachelor's degrees in Thai music education.

The data collection process. This was conducted through surveys that focused on issues and expectations regarding the teaching and management of Thai music theory and history. During the COVID-19 situation for three months, from March 23 to May 3, 2022, the online survey links were sent to students at each university through Line, Facebook, along with the electronic letter requesting cooperation which was generated by the faculty.

The research instruments. It included a documentary analysis form, and an online questionnaire approved by the Office of the Research Ethics Review Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects: The Second Allied Academic Group in Social Sciences, Humanities, and Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University. Also, the research instruments were tried out with three students and three music educators to ensure the quality of the instruments before collecting the data. In addition, using Google Forms, researchers developed a document analysis form, as well as an online questionnaire with the following details:

3.1. The Documentary Analysis Form, used to categorize document and electronic media sources, consisted of two sections: Section 1: Document and Electronic Media Details, which gathered 7 items regarding the specific details of the documents and electronic media, and Section 2: Content and Analysis Topics, which consisted of 4 items related to the content and analysis topics.

3.2 The questionnaire was designed to gather information about students' problems and expectations regarding their learning and teaching experiences. It consisted of two sections: Section 1: General Information, which included six questions, and Section 2: Issues and Expectations, which comprised nine questions focused on identifying the students' problems and expectations.

Data analysis. The researchers employed exploratory and descriptive research methods, and the data triangulation approach was employed to verify the data collected from 103 students who enrolled from 5 universities. Moreover, the collected data were read and analyzed from the survey by using the content analysis approach (Chantavanich, 2018) to categorize the set of data. This established inductive conclusions and presented them in terms of descriptive data, diagrams, and tables.

Findings

The researchers presented the research findings on the problems and expectations of students regarding the management of Thai music theory and history within the undergraduate music education curriculum in Thailand. The findings were categorized into five aspects, with the following details:

Teaching method. Due to the extensive content and diverse sources of information about music theory and history, it is a challenge for instructors to adequately prepare themselves with deep knowledge and a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Based on the study, the majority or all of the teaching was conducted through lecture-based methods involving one-way communication. In these methods, the instructor speaks while the students listen. This approach is challenging and slow, and it decreases student interest and engagement. Students get bored and lack motivation as they are passive receivers of information without active participation in the learning process. According to the results, some instructors lacked teaching materials for students, believing that providing such materials would lessen students' enthusiasm for learning. Instead, they instructed students to take notes during class and review them for exams. This approach resulted in inconsistent learning outcomes as students had to independently connect the content and seek additional information, especially when studying outside the classroom. The quality of their learning, then, depended on the content they managed to record. Thus, students believed that having teaching materials as helpful tools could improve their learning experiences. Furthermore, it was found that the majority of students desired more diverse teaching formats to facilitate authentic learning experiences. For instance, they felt that incorporating field studies into the curriculum, especially for Thai

music history, would provide opportunities for students to learn from actual historical evidence rather than relying solely on images in the classroom. In addition, organizing discussion activities would encourage the exchange of perspectives, allowing students to present ideas they had explored outside the classroom. This would promote collaborative learning within the classroom, extending beyond the predefined content provided by the instructor. The study also revealed that this issue affected students' perceptions of instructors regarding their presentation of information. Instructors tended to focus solely on familiar data and references, limiting the variety of information used in the learning process. This approach hindered the exploration of new perspectives and prevented students from accessing a wide range of alternative sources for study. Additionally, students also wanted to learn how to apply knowledge from both subject areas in their future roles as educators. They found that, even though they acquired knowledge during their studies, they were unable to effectively apply the knowledge in their teaching practices or conduct evaluations.

In summary, the research findings concluded that the predominant teaching method used in Thai music theory and history in undergraduate programs was lecture-based, resulting in disengaged learning and limited knowledge acquisition. Additionally, students expressed a desire for more field studies and discussions as teaching approaches, along with the introduction of diverse and contemporary teaching methods.

Content. The study revealed that the main content-related issue was the lack of clear delineation between the content of the two subjects; that is, in many cases, instructors mixed Thai music theory with Thai music history and literature, resulting in a disorganized arrangement of content without logical sequencing or coherence. Due to this confusion, students had trouble picking up on and comprehending complex ideas. The ability of students to apply knowledge in their teaching practice as well as when instructing Thai music theory and history was hampered by unclear content boundaries. For example, the teaching of Thai music theory includes a detailed study of the types of Thai music ensembles, their components, and the process of assembling them. However, during the teaching process, instructors often explained the history and literature that depicted the era in which Thai music ensembles originated. This content fell under the domain of history and literature. This resulted in complex content. Moreover, in terms of selecting and utilizing information, it was found that instructors only relied on familiar sources. This had an impact on students, many of whom felt that the content was not comprehensive enough. Additionally, the quantity of content often exceeded the available time available for learning, both with respect to an individual period and for the semester. As a result, there was a tendency for teachers to rush through the content at times. In terms of accessing information, contemporary students have a wide range of channels available for obtaining information, while instructors still rely on traditional sources.

Instructors are advised to have clear boundaries for the content, as such boundaries have an impact on the design of teaching and learning throughout the study period. Instructors are also encouraged to gather content from diverse sources, to allow students to study materials from various perspectives, and to promote the use of information based on reasoning. If a primary source of information is used in teaching, it is important to explain its origin and significance to help students understand the rationale behind its selection.

Instructional media. Instructors primarily relied on PowerPoint presentations for teaching. However, these presentations mainly consisted of text rather than utilizing visuals or videos. As a result, the instructional media failed to captivate students and did not facilitate comprehensive learning. Specifically, in Thai music theory, and especially regarding musical terminology, the use of images and sound is crucial to effective learning and better understanding. For instance, when explaining different types of ensemble performances, sounds, videos, or actual student performances should be incorporated to illustrate each characteristic. This allows learners to truly experience and actively participate in the learning process.

Students suggested the increased integration of technology in teaching, going beyond traditional software or websites, to enhance the learning experience, and said that some instructors had started using platforms like YouTube and Canva as additional teaching tools, recognizing the importance of up-to-date media in successfully delivering lessons on Thai music theory and history.

There are numerous modern teaching aids available that can be utilized to enhance teaching, activities, and out-of-classroom learning for students. Incorporating these tools can make the teaching and learning process more engaging and effective. Additionally, some universities have adopted some of these instructional materials as the primary teaching media. The main teaching aids commonly used by instructors can be summarized as Table 2 below:

Table 2

Types of media used and the problems in teaching

Types of Media	Problems	Students' Expectations
PowerPoint/Canva	• Content is text-heavy • Outdated • Lack of attractiveness • Media content is inconsistent with teaching content. • Difficult to understand	• There should be more use of images and VDOs in the instructional media to enhance visual clarity. • The media should be made more engaging and interesting. • The amount of text should be reduced. • The media should include references to the displayed information sources.
Images	• Unclear • There aren't many images appearing in the media.	
VDO/YouTube	• Very few VDOs are presented in the media.	

Instructional materials. It was found that each university had different approaches to managing its teaching resources. Some universities provide instructional materials in the form of textbooks authored by individual scholars with specific principles and perspectives; some universities used PowerPoint as instructional materials for students. Overall, however, students said that the content was both uninteresting and overly academic. Students desired more high-quality, clear, and visually appealing illustrations, such as images, books, or manuals, not just for interest, but to enhance understanding. Such materials should include diverse, reliable, and academically sound references, and it is important for the teaching materials to be up-to-date, affordable for undergraduate students, and to have clear summaries of content.

Furthermore, electronic teaching materials have become increasingly popular with students due to their ease of storage and prevention of loss. The summary of the issues and expectations of students regarding teaching materials is illustrated by Figure 1 and 2:
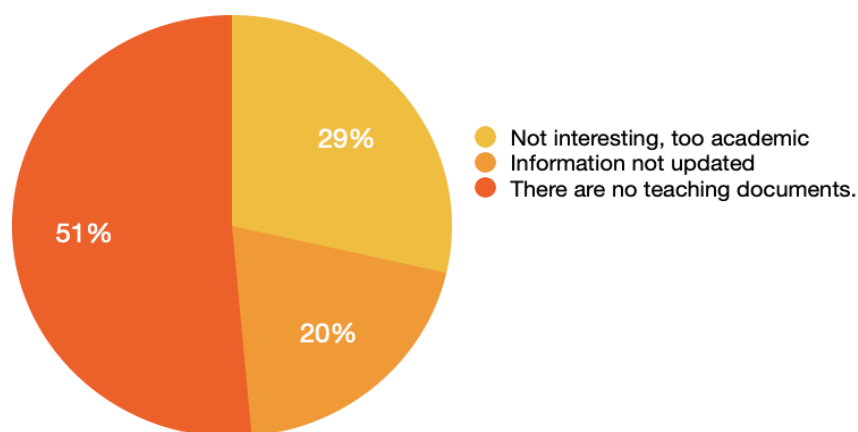

Figure 1. Problems of instructional materials for Thai music theory and history classes
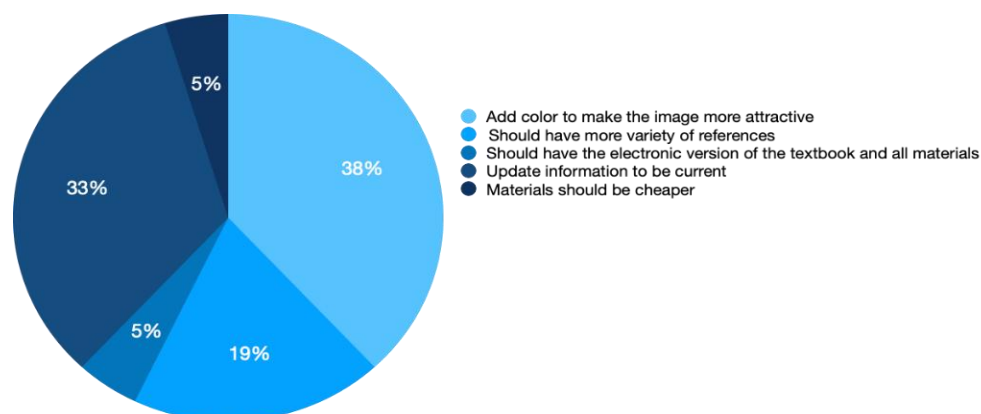
Figure 2. Student's needs for Thai music theory and history classes.

Context

The diversity of students played a crucial role in students' learning and advancement in music education, especially in terms of their varying basic knowledge of music theory and Thai music history across different universities. Those with a strong foundation in music knowledge could effectively engage with the instruction provided by teachers, finding enjoyment in the learning process and achieving a comprehensive integration of knowledge. However, students with limited foundational knowledge struggled to keep pace and often fell behind, resulting in incomplete learning experiences and loss of motivation. As a result, the instructional efforts in those instances proved unsuccessful. In addition, students expressed a need for accommodation of this diversity by providing modern and appropriate learning tools that would enable self-directed learning outside the classroom, allowing all students to learn at their own pace and maximize effectiveness.

Assignments. Students felt that instructors should establish assignments from the beginning of the semester, with those assignments clearly stated in the course syllabus. The number of assignments should be balanced with the course content and duration throughout the academic term.

Classroom conditions. Students at some universities encountered problems with the physical environment for onsite learning. That is, the classrooms were too small to accommodate the number of students, limiting the ability to conduct learning activities. Moreover, substandard classroom equipment affected students' concentration and the absence of electronic devices such as projectors, speakers, and microphones hindered the use of multimedia teaching aids. These factors resulted in incomplete learning experiences and an unfavorable learning atmosphere. In addition, with the shift to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was found that students did not favor this learning format. The majority encountered issues with unstable internet signals, and some faced other distractions in their learning environment that further disrupted the learning process and hindered concentration. Additionally, in online learning, students experienced a lack of interaction with other students, leading to reduced opportunities for activities such as questioning, expressing opinions, and conducting demonstrations. Online learning was not considered a natural learning approach, as it diminished students' motivation and limited collaborative engagement. Additionally, the distinct learning environment had a clear impact on students' learning experiences.

Instructor's preparedness. It was observed that most instructors were subject matter experts with relevant experience; however, they lacked the ability to effectively transmit the content to the students. Moreover, instructors often deviated from the material without considering its boundaries, resulting in a deviation from the scheduled time and overall instructional plan. Additionally, instructors exhibited insufficient proficiency in utilizing technology for teaching convenience and providing suitable instructional media. Therefore, further skill development and study in these areas are necessary for instructors.

Discussions

Problems and Obstacles of Thai music theory and history teaching and learning in Thailand.

The teaching of Thai music theory and history still faces various problems and obstacles. There is a lack of consensus among instructors regarding definitions and boundaries, leading to a merging of content between music theory and music history. In reality, the content of these two subjects has different definitions and emphases. Music theory deals with principles and methodologies, while music history encompasses the timeline of events from the past to the present. However, the data for music history has not been properly organized and compiled for effective teaching. Additionally, instructors seem to find the vast amount of content confusing in terms of defining scope, organizing material, and selecting specific information from all that is available to them. This has an impact on students, who receive incomplete and unclear content in both areas. Moreover, the use of instructional media is a crucial element in teaching these subjects. Instructors need to employ instructional media and demonstrative illustrations to ensure that students develop a clear perception and comprehension of the content, leading to enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in their learning outcomes. Many instructors lack skills in producing instructional media and designing appealing learning materials; this was especially apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic and its attendant online instruction of students. While theoretical and practical aspects are both emphasized in these subjects, obstacles are less likely to arise in practical sessions. However, the specialized content requires accurate, comprehensible, and interesting instructional media, along with suitable learning strategies for the specific context.

However, the researcher found that the teaching methods of oral tradition and the diversity of musical sect masters, which are inherent in Thai music education and driven by three institutions—homes, temples, and palaces—have been passed down from the past to the present. This might be a factor contributing to the transmission of diverse knowledge in both theoretical and practical aspects of Thai music. In particular, the transmission of knowledge in Thai music theory through the masters has led to conflicting interpretations on certain issues. This is compounded a lack of comprehensive compilation, summarization, analysis, and synthesis of the scope and details of the content to establish clear national standards, which are crucial to creating standardized criteria that Thai music professionals can collectively reference, especially in higher education. It is essential to expedite collaborative efforts to initiate this process swiftly as it will serve as a foundation for teaching and will strengthen the field of Thai music education, allowing it to progress further. In addition to observations of the challenges in Thai music education, the researcher has found that the teaching and learning of traditional music in other cultures with similar characteristics also face multidimensional problems and obstacles. For example, the influence of Western music culture has significantly impacted music education in Japan. Students have limited knowledge of traditional Japanese music, which is a matter of great concern for cultural preservation in the country. Therefore, there is an increasing emphasis on global music education to enable students to explore music from Japanese cultures through a teaching strategy called "Learn of the Connection," which focuses on the similarities and differences between Japanese music and various other musical traditions. By incorporating this approach, students have the opportunity to learn about their own national music in the context of broader musical studies. The recent developments in school music education in Japan, as discussed in "Crossroads for Cultural Education Through Music" by Takizawa (2008), align with the research conducted by Beng (2008) on a paradigm shift in teaching music in Malaysian schools. Both studies emphasize the incorporation of multicultural music in education while placing a strong emphasis on national music to instill values and strengthen cultural identity in the face of rapid global changes. Additionally, Jang's (2008) research on Korean music, music education, and the value of music and the arts in education and human development reveals that Korean national music is experiencing a decreasing influence from Western music culture, leading to a decline in popularity and a reduced focus on music education. The researchers suggest that weak national music education systems can lead to cultural intrusion and assimilation, particularly in Asian countries with similar cultures. As mentioned earlier, in the research in Japan and Malaysia, adjustments were made to integrate national music with other cultural music and to create an educational system that ensures the preservation of music within the respective cultures. Thus, the diversity of music education in Thailand, particularly in theoretical aspects, not only represents a significant cultural charm but also necessitates the accelerated collection, development, and standardization of knowledge in Thai music. This is crucial for establishing a strong cultural foundation and safeguarding against cultural intrusion while remaining connected to global society with its rich cultural diversity.

The guideline for the management of learning in Thai music theory and history through Outcome-based education (OBE) and blended learning approach

Global society is undergoing rapid changes due to various factors, notably the recent COVID-19 pandemic. These changes have highlighted technology's crucial and indispensable role in our daily lives. It can be said that we are living in an era of adaptation; therefore, acquiring skills that enable individuals to thrive in a global society has become exceedingly important. Education plays a significant role in shaping the direction of change and preparing the global population for the 'new normal' in the future. Consequently, the approach to learning has shifted from traditional methods, and towards fostering essential competencies that are necessary for sustainable and resilient living (The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2022). Outcome-based education (OBE) is an educational approach that places the learner at the center, focusing on learning outcomes and the necessary skills that they need to acquire based on their individual abilities. OBE emphasizes performance assessment and learner development, requiring ongoing monitoring and evaluation. In this context, teachers play the role of facilitators, ensuring optimal learning experiences for students (Japee & Oza, 2021; Davis, 2003; Rao, 2020; Spady, 1994). This aligns with the educational goals of producing individuals who are prepared for the present and future of global society. Thailand recognizes the significance of implementing OBE in education. In 2022, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research, and Innovation announced that all undergraduate programs must adopt the OBE approach to align with societal changes and the needs of learners in the present era (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2022a, 2022b). Based on the research findings and learner expectations, it is suggested that a shift be made away from content-based and lecture-based approaches, which primarily focus on one-way communication and instruction. In place of these outdated teaching methods, in today's world where knowledge is easily accessible, it is crucial to adapt teaching methods to the OBE (outcome-based education) approach, thus ensuring that education remains relevant and meets the needs of modern learners. OBE can address and fulfill the learning needs of Thai music theory, and Thai history by shifting away from the traditional content-based approach and memorization-based learning. By considering the students' problems, expectations, and contextual appropriateness, learning outcomes can be defined to maximize the application of knowledge for each student. Research shows that lecture-based teaching is currently the primary method used, resulting in unengaging learning environments, repetition, and one-way communication from the instructor. Consequently, students' learning outcomes are limited.

The traditional teaching approach focuses mainly on content memorization; there should be a fundamental change in the initial thinking and development to emphasize the student's ability to analyze knowledge and apply it effectively. In implementing OBE, it is crucial to prioritize learning outcomes (LO). Researchers have found that the direction of learning outcomes needs to be aligned with OBE principles for these two subjects. The aim of OBE is to enable students to perform and apply their knowledge effectively. Therefore, the researchers propose that learning outcomes (LO) for Thai music theory courses targeting undergraduate students in the music education curriculum should be revised to align with current research findings and student needs as follows:

LO1: Students will be able to analyze Thai music theory knowledge. It is crucial for students to capably analyze the causes and effects of theories in various aspects in order to truly comprehend the learning process. Currently, the nature of Thai music education often involves the transmission of knowledge from one generation to another, emphasizing student compliance without delving deeply into the origins or rationale behind the theories.

LO2: Students will be able to apply their knowledge of Thai music theory to practical skills and teaching. This builds upon LO1. Assuming that students have a clear understanding of Thai music theory, the application of knowledge becomes crucial and should be nurtured, as the general approach to teaching this subject often focuses solely on the course content without emphasizing the practical application, especially in teaching. Research has shown that students have a desire for enhanced application of knowledge as it greatly enhances their learning experience within the music education curriculum. Moreover, blended learning, as defined by Chulalongkorn University (2020), refers to a systematic learning process that takes place in various learning environments, including physical classrooms and virtual platforms via the Internet. Its primary goal is to ensure that learners achieve learning outcomes by combining online and onsite learning. This approach aligns with the OBE model, emphasizing the use of learning outcomes as the foundation. Online learning encompasses both synchronous learning (anywhere, real-time learning) and asynchronous learning (anywhere, anytime learning). Implementing blended learning in teaching and learning fosters diversity and significantly increases engagement, making the learning experience more varied and interesting. The learning process is organized into modules, and students have the freedom to choose the time and location of their learning. This modular approach enables learners to have greater flexibility and empowers them to participate in selecting their own learning methods. Instructors can effectively manage both content and time throughout the semester and utilize classroom time for activities that directly impact student learning. Therefore, if

instructors establish clear learning outcomes that align with the practical application of knowledge for students, it will significantly impact the appropriate content and instructional methods for both content and student learning. For example, in the context of Thai music theory, topics such as sound, rhythm, melody, and Thai songs can be learned beyond the level of memorization and understanding. Students can first learn the content online through asynchronous learning, focusing on concepts, and then engage in interactive discussions with the instructor through synchronous online or onsite learning to solidify their understanding.

Based on the content scope of both subjects, the researchers propose a prototype and approach for managing the blended learning of Thai music theory that aligns with the following learning outcomes:

Table 3

Thai music theory learning management through blended learning approach guidelines.

Chapter	Content	Learning Approach			
				Online	
		Learning Strategies	Onsite	Synchronous Learning	Asynchronous Learning
1	Introduction of Thai music theory	• Interactive Lectures • Group Discussion	100%	Or 100%	
2	Thai musical instruments	• Concept Mapping • Presentation	90%		
		• Lectures • Assignment			10%
3	Thai musical ensembles	• Mind Mapping • Demonstration • Presentation	90%		
		• Lectures • Assignment			10%
4	Thai musical elements: Sound, Rhythm, and Melody	• Concept Mapping • Case-based Learning • Demonstration • Practice	90%		
		• Lectures			10%
5	Genres in Thai music	• Concept Mapping • Case-based Learning	90%		10%
		• Lectures			
6	Principles and techniques of Thai instrumental performance and singing	• Concept Mapping • Case-based Learning • Demonstration • Practice	80%		
		• Lectures			20%
7	Repertoire and Thai musical Ensembles: Performance of Thai music according to seasonal conventions	• Concept Mapping • Case-based Learning • Group Discussion • Brainstorm	100%	Or 100%	
8	Thai music teacher's ritual	• Field Trip • Practice • Group Discussion	90%		
		• Lectures • Concept Mapping			10%
9	Thai musical terms	• Case-based Learning • Demonstration • Practice	60%		
		• Lectures • Concept Mapping			40%

Based on Table 3 provided, the researcher extracted the lessons from the learning management of the Thai Music Theory course for 103 first-year undergraduate students majoring in Music Education, Department of Arts, Music, and Performing Arts Education, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, during the first semester of the 2022 academic year. It was found that all students achieved the learning outcome of the course comprehensively and demonstrated progress based on the pre-test and post-test assessments. Therefore, a prototype of the Thai Music Theory learning management system was presented for further study and exploration in the future. The researchers have an observation regarding the sequencing of learning in this subject. They found that it begins with: (1) content memorization; (2) in-depth content analysis; (3) deep comprehension of the content, and finally (4) application of the acquired knowledge. This sequence aligns with Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson et al., 2001), which consists of six levels of learning: (1) remembering; (2) understanding; (3) applying; (4) analyzing; (5) evaluating; and (6) creating. However, the lesson learned from the analysis is that once learners have memorized the content, it is necessary to analyze the material to achieve comprehension and facilitate the application of knowledge. This finding contrasts with the sequencing of levels 2-4 in Bloom's Taxonomy, indicating that the learning sequence in the cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy can serve as a starting framework for instructional design. In OBE-based learning, the emphasis is on defining the learning outcomes (LO), which may vary. Therefore, it is essential to align with the LO as the foundation and utilize Bloom's Taxonomy learning sequence for analysis while maintaining flexibility in sequencing and instructional design to ensure maximum effectiveness and suitability for the learners' context.

The integration of outcome-based education (OBE) with blended learning effectively caters to the requirements of educators and learners in terms of the learning process. Unlike traditional teaching methods that prioritize content delivery via lectures, and which limit learning to levels of memorization and understanding only, OBE allows learners to achieve learning outcomes (LO) and develop their abilities to a level where they can apply them effectively, which is essential for individuals in the current and future global population. The Thai Music Theory curriculum, implemented through blended learning, presents a table outlining how learners can study certain content independently, freeing up classroom time for interactive activities and diversified learning experiences. This approach maximizes the effectiveness and efficiency of learning outcomes.

Moreover, the Thai Ministry of Education's Higher Education Standards (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2565a, 2565b) for undergraduate programs in Thailand states that learners should reach the application level of learning, as outlined in Bloom's Taxonomy Level 3, where knowledge is applied. However, based on the researcher's firsthand experience as both a learner and an instructor, it has been observed that learners can attain the analysis stage (Level 4) as well. This is because Thai music theory involves principles and reasoning based on established criteria. Therefore, if students comprehend and can analyze these criteria, they will be able to apply their knowledge accurately and effectively in both musical practice and teaching. The researcher believes that the learning abilities of undergraduate learners should not be restricted merely to the application stage but should be expanded to the analysis stage. Combining OBE with blended learning in Thai music theory and history is a new approach in Thailand. However, the researcher believes that integrating these learning approaches can lead to efficient and targeted management of both subjects while also increasing student engagement and promoting the practical application of knowledge in the modern era.

Suggestions

Instructors at the undergraduate level and music educators from different cultures should study the students' challenges, expectations, and contextual factors related to the content of music theory and history. This will accelerate the development of learning outcomes that align with the context of educational, economic, and societal development plans. Strategic approaches to instruction should be designed, including the synthesis of innovative learning methods that are diverse and tailored to the specific characteristics of each region or nation while remaining current and aligned with national standards. These strategies should effectively enable learners to achieve the desired learning outcomes and contribute to the sustainability of education and the preservation of valuable knowledge in the arts and cultural domains.

Acknowledgement

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